



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building  
125 South State Street, Room 4402  
Salt Lake City, UT 84138-1100

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October 31, 2007

**UTAH BULLETIN NO. UT300-08-05**

**SUBJECT: LTP – FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2008 CONSERVATION SECURITY  
PROGRAM (CSP) ANNUAL PAYMENTS**

**Purpose.** To provide information and instruction to field offices for completing the FY 2008 CSP annual payments.

**Expiration Date.** September 30, 2008.

**Field Office – Action Required by December 21, 2007 or February 1, 2008**

**Background:** Public Law 107-171, Section 1238 c (2), states that the Secretary will make conservation stewardship contract payments as soon as practicable after October 1. Annual payment and new practice payment procedures are described in the 440-Conservation Program Manual, Section 518.84.

**Definition:** The annual payment for the established conservation system is to include the stewardship payment, the existing practice payment, and the established enhancement activities that have previously been applied and are a recurring part of the conservation system. The annual payment will not include payment for new enhancements or new practices which are not ready for certification and payment. New practices and new enhancements are to be certified and approved for payment only after they are documented as established.

CSP enhancement activities are based on the level of stewardship performed on an agricultural operation system level. Where feasible, system extents should be used as opposed to actual yearly extents. It is not expected or feasible for yearly modifications to be processed to capture the exact extent of an enhancement activity.

**Limited Modifications:** CSP modification buttons will be active during the annual payment process to allow changes in participant information which are critical to processing annual payments. **This is not a contract improvement modification period.**

Because the participant agrees to maintain at least the benchmark level of treatment, changes in extent of a benchmark enhancement to a lesser amount would constitute a potential contract violation. Changes upward would constitute a contract improvement and need to be addressed during an announced contract improvement modification request period.

**Payment Process:** The CSP allocation will allow **payment of 100%** of the current FY 2008 contract obligations. A script has been run in Protracts to obligate the FY 2008 contract items. Offices can now certify and approve annual payments. Participant signature(s) are required on the NRCS-CPA-1245. Contract participants may elect to receive their FY 2008 annual payment before December 31, 2007, or to defer the payment until after January 1, 2008. Payments must be certified in ProTracts by **December 21, 2007**, to ensure the payment is received by the participant in calendar year 2007. Calendar year 2008 payments are not to be signed in advance and then “held” until January. By policy, payment documents are to be transferred to the second level reviewing official (FNM) immediately following payment approval. Financial Management will not be able to process payments with outdated signatures.

**Time Charges:** Time will be charged to CSP for the explicit purpose of performing the following activities; annual reviews and quality assurance, maintenance modifications, prior year payments, and processing FY2008 annual payments.

**Notify Participants:** A sample letter is attached that can be sent to contract holders describing their payment options. The letter is formatted for use as a mail merge document if desired. The mailing list can be generated from ProTracts by pulling up active CSP contracts and using the Manage Letters function.

**Action:** Field Offices with CSP contracts are to immediately begin processing CSP FY 2008 annual payments. All FY 2008 CSP annual payments are to be processed no later than **February 1, 2008**.

If you have any questions regarding this information, contact your Area Programs Specialist.

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LISA COVERDALE  
Assistant State Conservationist - Programs

Enclosure

Distribution: E